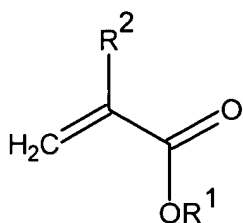


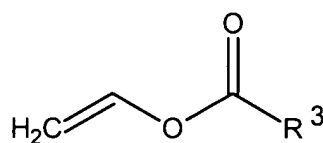
COPY OF ALL CLAIMS

1. (currently amended) A water-soluble or water-dispersible copolymer obtained by free-radical polymerization of a monomer mixture consisting essentially of

- a) 80 to 20% by weight of a mixture of hydroxy- C_1 - C_6 -alkyl(meth)acrylate and one or more compounds of the formula (A) or (B)



(A)



(B)

with $R^1 = H, C_1$ - C_6 -alkyl,

$R^2 = H, CH_3$,

$R^3 = C_1$ - C_{24} -alkyl,

or mixtures thereof,

wherein the content of hydroxy- C_1 - C_6 -alkyl(meth)acrylate in % by weight in a) is at least equal to ~~as large as the combined content of the~~ one or more compounds of the formula (A) or and (B) in % by weight, in the presence of

- b) 20 to 80% by weight of polyvinyl alcohol (PVA) and
c) 0 to 20% by weight of other polymerizable compounds (C) selected from

the group consisting of acrylic and methacrylic acids, crotonic acid, mono(C₁-C₈)-alkyl maleates, maleic acid, fumaric acid, itaconic acid, (meth)acrylonitrile, ethylenically unsaturated di(C₁-C₂₂)-alkyl dicarboxylates, ethylenically unsaturated sulfonic acids or sulfonic acid derivatives, acyclic N-vinylcarboxamides and N-vinylactams.

2. (original) A water-soluble or water-dispersible copolymer as claimed in claim 1, wherein the free-radical polymerization is an emulsion polymerization.
3. (previously presented) A water-soluble or water-dispersible copolymer as claimed in claim 1, wherein hydroxyethyl methacrylate is employed as hydroxy-C₁-C₆-alkyl (meth)acrylate.
4. (previously presented) A water-soluble or water-dispersible copolymer as claimed in claim 1, wherein the compounds of the formula (A) are selected from the group consisting of methyl methacrylate, ethyl acrylate, methyl acrylate, and mixtures thereof.
5. (previously presented) A water-soluble or water-dispersible copolymer as claimed in claim 1, wherein the compounds of the formula (B) are selected from the group consisting of C₃-C₂₄-vinyl esters.

6. (previously presented) A process for preparing water-soluble or water-dispersible copolymers as claimed in claim 1 by free-radical polymerization in an aqueous or nonaqueous but water-miscible solvent or in mixed nonaqueous/aqueous solvents.
7. (original) A process as claimed in claim 6, wherein the polymerization takes place in the presence of from 30 to 55% by weight of polyvinyl alcohol.
8. (previously presented) A pharmaceutical dosage form comprising at least one water-soluble or water-dispersible copolymer as claimed in claim 1 as coating agent, binder and/or film-forming excipient.
9. (canceled)